



Buzzwords ...

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MR N WALLINGFORD
55 WATLING STREET
TAURANGA

WALLING 21

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..... the newsletter for National Beekeepers' Association members

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PRESIDENT'S NOTES

In writing this article for *Buzzwords* I believe a brief report on our recent executive meeting in Christchurch is appropriate. Wednesday 12 September was spent visiting organisations whose activities have an important impact on our industry.

We spent the morning visiting MAF Border Protection Services at Christchurch Airport with John Burton, Manager of Border Protection. I will touch only briefly on this visit as there is a fuller account later in this issue. I was impressed with the operation and the layout in the arrivals hall, and by watching the processing on an incoming flight from Japan gained an insight into the operation of the new red and green outlets. Currently it takes 45 minutes to clear an aircraft but Mike Moore has indicated that he would like to see this reduced to 30 minutes!

We spent the afternoon at Lincoln where we first visited

Peter Read (Dr Barry Donovan's second in charge) who brought us up to date on the wasp parasite programme. My summing up of the programme is that district councils will need to become involved before we see much of a reduction in the wasp population.

Our next visit was to discuss the biological control of weeds with Pauline Syrett. Current DSIR studies are being carried out into the control of a number of plants useful to bees, eg gorse, broom and heather (*Calluna*), and some of doubtful utility such as hawkweed. It is very apparent that our industry is facing an uphill battle with the larger lobby groups. I do believe our visit with these people will have a positive effect. They now have first-hand knowledge of how seriously their work can affect the beekeeping industry.

Our final visit was with Jim Bell on the subject of jam baits and 1080 poison. I found it interesting that this scientist had worked with Trevor Palmer-Jones at Wallaceville on

this 1080 problem. Another important point is that he is communicating with Mark Goodwin at Ruakura. The sooner we can get away from the use of jam baits and use an alternative not attractive to bees the better. A large number of commercial beekeepers in NZ at the present time are being seriously affected by the use of 1080 and jam baits. While farmers are being affected by the spread of TB in their cattle and deer this poisoning will increase.

During Thursday a brief discussion was held with Graham Barrington and Stuart White of MAF regarding MAF's role in the beekeeping industry in the South Island.

Concern was expressed by members of the executive regarding the exporting of New Zealand honey to Australia. Cheap honey from Australia could be a real threat to our industry. Those exporting into this market should look carefully at the other side of the coin. Indications on the world market at the present time show definite signs of improvement in demand!

Dudley Ward, NBA president

RESEARCH IDEAS WANTED

The Apicultural Research Advisory Committee is currently gathering topics for possible research. To assist the industry ARAC wants all potential researchers to know what it is that beekeepers consider important for investigation. After collecting the ideas they will be sent to a wide variety of people and institutions that might be interested in conducting research projects. University students, for instance, might choose such a topic if they only knew there was interest in the field.

Bees, beekeeping and marketing are all possible areas of study. Don't limit yourself to the 'possible' - include your ideas for the very valuable but unlikely to be done projects, too. Send your individual and branch lists (excellent topic for a meeting!) to: ARAC, c/- National Beekeepers Assn, PO Box 4048, Wellington.

ARAC

VISIT TO BORDER PROTECTION

During the recent executive committee meetings in Christchurch your executive was given a briefing on the workings of the Border Protection Service of MAF. John Burton (who some may remember from a talk he gave at the Greymouth conference several years back) described the overall workings of the service and its methods of operation and staffing.

Beekeeping has an incredibly high profile for these people, fueled partly by the priority given in the past in our industry planning to excluding bee pests and diseases. One of Border Protection's current projects, for instance, involves visiting every travel agent in the country to try to reduce the number of suspect items being brought back by travellers. The large glossy pamphlet used by their people for that visit uses (you guessed it!) the dangers of bringing back a jar of honey from overseas as an example.

This information pamphlet is out and it has an eye-catching cover: "How to save your clients eight thousand million

dollars - leave it behind." The theme of this is: "Imagine losing eight billion dollars - It's easier than you think." The programme develops the theme by saying how important agriculture security is to the financial health of our country. But beekeeping gets centre spread.

The example they use to show how an innocent mistake can affect New Zealand's agriculture is the case of the imported jar of honey. Here's what it says:

"A simple jar of honey could cause a trail of destruction...imagine travellers returning home with their honey purchased overseas. Honey that may be carrying bee diseases that New Zealand bees don't have. Once they discard the honey pot - roaming bees scavenge and could become infected.

"Meanwhile...back at the hive. Newly emerged larvae may be infected through feeding and cleaning. The infected hive could be raided by other bees from other hives and the deadly cycle begins. Thousands of hives would burn, the result - our exports of honey and honey products drastically reduced!

"But that's not all...think about it...most crops require pollination - our apples, kiwifruit, pears and peaches all under threat. YOU CAN HELP PREVENT THIS."

This message is splashed across the centre of the magazine and is the prime quarantine message of the brochure.

John Burton explained that it is a story that people can readily understand and agree with. Included in the project is another pamphlet that is being supplied in massive numbers to the travel agents to include in the traveller's ticket folder. Again, the danger to our industry is used as the example.

This sort of publicity for the beekeeping industry hasn't happened by accident. It's the result of a lot of work by your national executive and MAF's apicultural advisers.

The NBA executive has taken the trouble to have its meetings in Auckland and Christchurch, and use the opportunity to visit border protection facilities. MAF's border protection service have been very impressed by this kind of interest - beekeeping is one of the few industry groups to show such concern.

TRAINING FOR BORDER PROTECTION STAFF

"But New Zealand doesn't have a border" is the response of many people, when they hear about MAF's border protection service.

It's true that we don't have a land border with fences and frontier posts, but we do have a lot of little borders. Everywhere that goods and people from overseas reach New Zealand is a frontier.

Our borders include the obvious places like airports and container ports, but there's a lot of less obvious ones -

yachts arriving from overseas, joint-venture fishing fleets, and even the overseas mail centre in South Auckland. MAF's border protection officers monitor all these situations, to prevent the introduction of biological material which could threaten our primary industries.

The border protection officers are trained to recognise all sorts of hazardous materials and likely methods of importation. Some, though, are receiving extra training in bees and bee products.

Apicultural consultants Andrew Matheson and Murray Reid wrote a training programme for these people. It's a one-day course which participants can go through at their own pace.

So far there's been courses in Auckland and Christchurch, and the aim is to have at least two members in every quarantine team with an extra knowledge of possible hazards to the beekeeping industry, the correct decisions to make on imports, and follow-up actions such as emergency response procedures and prosecutions.

MAF apiculture unit



OTAGO FIELD DAY

Saturday October 6
'Better Beekeeping'

A series of six workshops of which beekeepers can attend four, involving practical demonstrations with discussion question and answers. Participation vital.

Venue: Ross and Clare Mackay, Lindis Crossing, 20 km north of Cromwell on route to Lindis Pass

9:30 to 10:30 morning tea, informal discussion,
10:30 first workshop session starts.

For more information contact Lyn McKenzie, President Otago Branch, (03) 444 9257

ATTENTION EXPORTERS

A special exhibition for the food industry and agricultural industries will be held in Berlin during International Green Week, which is 25 January to 3 February 1991. Get more information from the Food & Beverage Exporters Council, PO Box 10396, Wellington, telephone (04) 723 035 or fax (04) 723 959.

There will also be an ANUGA '91, a big international food and beverage trade fair in Germany. The Food and Beverage Exporters Council is contributing \$400 000 to help exhibitors at this fair.

And there's a trade fair in France that is worth some attention. The Fifth Catering Hotel Trade and Food Fair will be in Lyon from 19-23 January 1991. For further information contact Eurexpo, Sepel, BP87, F69683, Chassieu Cedex. Phone 72223344, or fax 72223270.

END OF AN ERA - WHITELINE QUEENS CLOSES

Owing to Terry Gavin's allergy to propolis and a knee injury of his next in charge Whiteline Queens is now out of business. Pat and Terry Gavin regret any inconvenience caused to their customers and thank all the beekeepers who have supported them over the years.

HIVE INSPECTION STATEMENTS

Yes, it's that time of year again. Your annual hive inspection statements will be hitting the mail box soon.

Seems there's a bit of confusion about these - some beekeepers think they can't return the forms until they've done all their spring rounds, or got the hives out of pollination onto summer sites...or even tucked up for winter.

You can return these forms as soon as you've inspected all the hives once. The numbers recorded for each apiary should be the numbers as at the date the form is signed - that way there's no double counting of hives.

Of course if you find AFB after submitting a return you'll notify it to MAF straight away. And movement of hives after the return is in will be to already-registered apiaries, or sites you'll register within 14 days.

Remember, it's in your interest to keep costs down by sending your returns in promptly. Reminders and chase ups cost a lot of money.

MAF apiculture unit.

AFRICANIZED HONEY BEES IN FLORIDA

On 6 February 1990 a colony of Africanized honey bees was discovered by workers unloading a ship at Port Everglades in Florida. The bees had hitchhiked aboard a coastal freighter from Guatemala, and the colony of about

40,000 bees was destroyed at the port by quarantine officers. Florida officials will place a dozen additional hives near the port in the next few weeks to attract any that may not have been killed.

This was the fifth swarm of AHB intercepted in or near a Florida port and the second occurrence in Port Everglades. The previous swarm was destroyed in May 1988.

USDA

QUEEN QUALITY COMPETITION

How good are your queen-rearing methods. Are you doing the best grafting and feeding methods possible? Now's the time to prepare for this year's queen quality competition, so you can find out.

Queens will be accepted for testing from October 1990 to April 1991. Two queens are required for each entry: they will be tested at MAF's Lynfield laboratory (last year's cost was \$56). For entry forms and full details send \$5.00 to Reg Clarke, 81 Lakings Rd, Blenheim.

AND LAST YEAR'S

Last year's competition got off to a late start, so suffered a little from lack of entries. But a fairly high standard has been set as a baseline, and hopefully this tentative start can be built on in future, providing more support is forthcoming next year. Real success will not occur unless the major producers get involved.

The methods of production used by contestants appear to be their normal commercial practice. Contestants freely disclosed their methods, and this is the most valuable part of the competition, as it enables what would otherwise be a simple matter of winners and losers to become a cooperative learning experience.

The results given below are average values for two queens, and rank order is determined by the average reproductive index value. That figure is the sum of: ovariole number + (spermatheca volume x 270) + (sperm count x 40). That gives approximately equal weighting to the three values.

RESULTS

Entrant	1	2	3
Ovarioles (total)	355	354	332
Spermatheca (volume)	1.39	1.225	1.06
Sperm (millions)	8.58	8.59	6.26
Nosema	nil	nil	negl
Reproductive index	1075	1028	868.6

Entrant 1:	Sunflora Apiaries
Entrant 2:	Daykel Apiaries
Entrant 3:	Ashburton Apiaries

Comparative data:

	World maxima	NZ maxima	Good averages
Ovarioles (total)	405	376	300
Spermatheca (volume)	1.52	1.48	1.00
Sperm (millions)	11.8	9.86	5.0
Reproductive index	1286	1170	770

Comments. All queens had been well mated and contained between 6 and 7 million sperm per cubic millimetre. Nosema in escort bees was well controlled. In one case only, a very low (negligible) level was detected. Fumagillin treatment was used by all entrants. All contestants openly disclosed their methods, which were variations of the queenless starter/queenright finisher system. The methods were normal commercial practice, rather than contrived for competitive purposes.

The contestants have received a detailed analysis, based on the questionnaire they all completed. There were several clues to the way results may have been influenced by technique, which should help the contestants to improve.

THIS COUNTRY OF OURS

Don't forget to catch the last of the TV series *Moa's Ark*. It's a fascinating and enjoyable look at how New Zealand's unique and precious environment ended up the way it is.

BUZZWORDS IS ...

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Articles and feedback to *Buzzwords*, c/- MAF, Private Bag, Tauranga. Phone (075) 782 069. Fax (075) 788 429. Deadline for copy is the 20th of each month.

The views expressed in *Buzzwords* are not necessarily those of the National Beekeepers' Association nor of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries.